

A Path Forward Through Pioneering

by **JOE LASKY, JR., CSP, CHMM**

AT OUR MOST recent TAUC 2015 Leadership Conference, I had the opportunity to share my mission as the new Chairman for the TAUC Safety and Health Committee: to build on the stepping stones TAUC has already established and continue our “Pioneering.” Key to the future success of our committee’s pioneering mentality is our goal to continue to expand new areas of thought, research, and development in the safety, health & environmental field.

My experience with pioneering actually started with my sons’ journeys to earn their Eagle Scout Awards. As always, in all scouting activities as well as construction, safety must come first. Our High Adventures Camps took us to camp sites in the wilderness of New Mexico, on the rough seas off the coast of Florida, and throughout the Boundary Waters of Canada. During each trip, my sons and I learned what it really takes to survive – and thrive – when odds and Mother Nature are against you.

Together we recognized a common theme threading through each adventure: In and through the challenges, fun, and rewards that go hand in hand with pioneering, there can be no substitute for prudent behavior and common sense.

Each one of us has had some experience as a “Pioneer.” Perhaps you were the first one to open an entrepreneurial business and were successful. Or maybe you were selected to lead the way for an organization or group (e.g., TAUC). Or perhaps you came up with a new idea that helped change the safety culture of your company. I envision the TAUC Safety and Health Committee as an innovator for the benefit of our industries. I am thrilled that under the guidance of my predecessor

Kathleen Dobson and TAUC Senior Director of Environmental Health and Safety Wayne Creasap, we have already begun a big pioneering step in partnering with the North America’s Building Trades Unions’ (NABTU) Safety and Health Committee to learn of new products and concepts that ultimately protect employees on the job or at home. In addition, our status as a liaison with OSHA, NIOSH, and ACCSH provides our companies with a “voice” to accept or challenge regulatory changes. We can never be satisfied with the status quo; change is inevitable and required to improve and grow.

I am proud to be a member of this elite pioneering group, TAUC. The Safety and Health Committee is looking forward to other safety professionals joining our group. A pioneer is a leader, trailblazer, forerunner, or pathfinder. Just look in the mirror every day. I have no doubt you will see a “pioneer.” I also believe that we all have the “Pioneering Spirit” engrained in us – to be one who takes chances and tries new and different things, whether they are related to work, leisure, home, or just life in general.

With a Pioneering Spirit, one lives by a different set of ideas. Pioneers question, even challenge, what appears to be impossible. I encourage my own Scheck team to look at our projects and sites in a new way, every day. They take notice of new obstacles, risks and successes, and use their own Pioneering Spirits to guide their instincts in maintaining our safety record. Such awareness and innovation can lead to change, and the newness it brings, which is ultimately a motivator for all of us.

We must continue to make safety a part of everything we do – both on and off the job. I am approaching my new responsibility as chair of the S&H Committee with this in mind,



Scout Pioneering Badge

always. I am focused on three priority areas where I believe TAUC can make the most impact.

First, we will continue to represent TAUC in key professional organizations, including:

- ANSI A10 Accredited Standards Committee
- North America’s Building Trades Unions (NABTU) Safety and Health Committee
- Center for Construction Research and Training
- Drug Free Workplace Alliance
- National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Construction Sector Council through NIOSH
- We also serve as a liaison with OSHA and frequently attend ACCSH and other industry stakeholder meetings

Second, I am dedicated to ensuring members understand what resources are available to make all sites as safe as possible. Falls continue to be one of the biggest killers in our industry and TAUC supports the Fall Prevention Stand Down, which recently wrapped up. This is just one example of the resources available to you as a member of TAUC. A good place to start

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The Value of National Relationships

by **BILL KROEGER**

AS LEO CHAIR for the past two years, I have had the opportunity to participate in all of TAUC's meetings and conferences, which bring together members of the union construction and maintenance industry from around the country. The value of meeting new people and creating what I call "national relationships" is invaluable.

At TAUC's latest Leadership Conference, this value was on full display when the leaders of nine building trades unions – with members in every state in the country – took the stage for a roundtable discussion and a question-and-answer period (see Page 23). Talk about national relationships! And the networking opportunities were fantastic too, with contractor executives, labor leaders, other association officials, owner executives, and national building trade leaders participating in the numerous meetings. Our LEO members were able to compare notes, trade ideas, expand their knowledge base, and create relationships that will help improve the quality of services they provide to their local contractors. It's one more reason why I encourage any LEO representative


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reading this article to seriously consider becoming a part of TAUC.

TAUC is the only national organization that promotes union construction at every turn and stresses strong labor management relationships. In an article written by TAUC Labor Chair Jacob Snyder last issue (Spring 2015, Page 26 – worth the read!), he stresses the need for positive labor relations. I could not have said it better myself. We need to continue to nurture the labor-management relationships and encourage proactive initiatives that will make us more competitive and marketable against our non-union competition.

This year I accepted an invitation to attend the Iron Workers Spring

Executive Council meeting. This created an additional opportunity for networking and relationship-building that has improved our own working relationships with the Iron Workers. This opportunity would not have been possible without being part of the TAUC Board.

In closing, I would like to encourage all contractors that are awarded work in the jurisdiction of our LEO members to reach out and let them assist you in any way they can. It is the LEO members who have been cultivating the labor-management relationship for many years. Likewise, I would strongly urge all of our LEO members to provide the same top-notch service to those visiting contractors as if they were one of your own long-time members. This is one way to ensure that moving forward, we help the union construction and maintenance industry grow market share. 



Bill Kroeger is the TAUC LEO Committee Chair and Vice President of Labor Relations for the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Missouri.


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is TAUC's safety page at www.tauc.org/safety. There you'll find more information about TAUC's various initiatives and the topics our committee is actively working on.

My third priority for this committee is tied directly to what I live and breathe every day at Scheck Industries, where we are committed to innovation, quality, and safety to achieve one ultimate goal – Complete Customer Satisfaction. My sons' scouting experiences reinforced our basic instincts to maintain personal safety through common sense. I promote the same approach every day with my crews.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I am honored with this new role, and am committed to listening to my

own Pioneering Spirit. I ask that you join me on our next Pioneering Adventure together.

Have a Safe Day! 



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